

B-4485

GILMOR HOMES

BALTIMORE CITY, MD

This is a four-block public housing project from 1940. Gilmor Homes is comprised of 35 three- and four-story, brown brick, nine-by-two-bay garden apartments. They are flat-roofed buildings executed in the International Style. Publicly owned, but private access to individual units.

ND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES FORM
SANDTOWN-WINCHESTER SURVEY

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name Gilmor Homes

other names/site number Gilmor Homes/ B-4485

2. Location

street & number Gilmor & Presstman Sts. not for publication

city or town Baltimore vicinity N/A
state Maryland code MD county Baltimore City code 510
zip code 21217

3. State/Federal Agency Certification N/A

4. National Park Service Certification N/A

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
35	buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
35	Total

SDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form
(Gilmor Homes)
(Baltimore City, MD)

B-4485
(Page 2)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC

Sub: multiple dwelling

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: DOMESTIC

Sub: multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Moderne

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

roof

walls BRICK

other STONE,

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) See continuation sheet.

8. Statement of Significance See continuation sheet.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Social History

Community Planning and Development

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form
(Gilmor Homes)
(Baltimore City, MD)

B-4485
(Page 3)

Period of Significance 1940s

Significant Dates 1940-41

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Clyde N. Friz

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) See continuation sheet.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Maps

Bromley, G.W. and Co. Atlas of the City of Baltimore, Vol. 1. Philadelphia: 1885, 1896.
Hopkins, G.M. Map of the City of Baltimore, Maryland. 1876, 1877.
Sanborn Map Company. Insurance Maps, Baltimore, Maryland, Vols. 2,3, and 7. New York: 1890, 1901, 1914, 1928.
Simmons, Isaac. 1852 Revision of the Thomas H. Poppleton Map. Baltimore: 1852.

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4.09 acres

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form
(Gilmor Homes)
(Baltimore City, MD)

B-4485
(Page 4)

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	—	—	—	3	—	—
2	—	—	—	4	—	—

— See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundaries include all of the four blocks completed in 1941 as part of the development.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries are based on a city lot(s) retaining original property lines.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth Jo Lampl & Kay Fanning/Architectural Historians
organization Robinson & Associates date July 1992
street & number 1710 Connecticut Ave., NW telephone (202) 234-2333
city or town Washington state DC zip code 20009

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name ??Gilmor Homes Housing Authority
street&number 1619 N. Presstman, P.O. Box 1917 telephone
city or town Baltimore state MD zip code

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 5 & 6 Page 1

Gilmor Homes
name of property
Baltimore City, Maryland
county and State

HISTORIC CONTEXT

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Piedmont

Chronological/Developmental Period(s): Modern Period

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s): Architecture, Landscape
Architecture, and Community Planning; Social/Education/Cultural

Resource Type:

Category: building(s)

Historic Environment: urban

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): domestic

Known Design Source: Clyde N. Friz

B-4485

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Gilmor Homes
name of property
Baltimore City, Maryland
county and StateDESCRIPTION

Gilmor Homes is comprised of four blocks of three- and four-story brown-brick, nine-by-two-bay garden apartments built in 1940 in the International Style. The placement of the long buildings--many perpendicular to the street and some at 90-degree angles to one another--provided areas for open space, daylight, and recreation. Ironically, the buildings' forms are a contemporary abstraction of the typical rowhouse block; however, they were designed as part of the early public housing movement to rectify the inadequate living conditions of alleys tenants.

The project is L-shaped in its land use, and comprises four blocks of the survey area between Laurens and Presbury and Gilmor and Mount/Fulton. Each block includes a number of garden apartment structures, with central playgrounds, a spray pool, lawns, and/or parking areas in the open spaces between buildings. Each block also originally contained a drying yard with a sitting area. Retaining walls of rubble stone were used to separate living quarters from the drying yards. Block "B" features the central heating plant for the development.

Each rectangular block was organized to accommodate either ten, fifteen, twenty, or twenty-four dwelling units. Only six buildings are four stories in height. The three-story buildings contained one-story apartments on the first floor, and a dual-level, two- or three-bedroom apartment on the upper level. A typical, first-floor apartment included direct access into a combination living room and kitchen/dining room, and a single bath and bedroom in the rear. The private stairs which led to the upper dwelling were located between the living room and bedroom of the first-floor apartment. The upper dwelling included a living room and kitchen/dining area on the second floor (and sometimes a third bedroom), and the two larger bedrooms and a bath on the upper floor.

Each apartment block is nine bays long on the entrance facade and two bays deep. The roof form is flat. The buildings are set upon fieldstone foundations, and have cast-stone beltcourses demarcating the first story from the two upper stories and acting as lintels for the first-floor windows. A cast-stone beltcourse above the third-floor windows of each building also

B-4485

NPS Form 10-900-a
(8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 2

Gilmor Homes
name of property
Baltimore City, Maryland
county and State

forms their window lintel, as well as the lowest zone of a simple cornice. A brick beltcourse at the level of the third-floor window sills girdles the apartment block. All openings are flat, formed of lintels rather than arches. Windows and doors are arranged in groups of two and three, and all windows are one-over-one double-hung sash. Originally the windows were casements, with a combination of operable and fixed sash. The doors are grouped, like the windows, in sets of two and three and framed with aluminum exterior door systems. Above each entry is a cantilevered cast-stone hood.

Continued maintenance by the Housing Authority of Baltimore City has resulted in major site and building renovations. These include landscape changes, and door and window replacements. (See attached plans for most recent series of renovations.)

B-4485

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 1

Gilmor Homes
name of property
Baltimore City, Maryland
county and State

SIGNIFICANCE

Gilmor Homes was designed in 1940 during the second phase of the American public housing movement by a renowned Baltimore architect, Clyde N. Friz. It is a significant International Style expression of the goals of public housing in America during the relatively early years of this social movement.

The Public Works Administration (PWA) of the Roosevelt Administration acted as the initial force behind the public housing movement. Public housing began as a "slum clearance" effort to eradicate sub-standard alley housing. Towards this end, the PWA developed a set of design guidelines in 1935, based primarily on European public housing models. These guidelines stressed design ideals to promote sanitary, livable conditions, with emphasis on light, air, recreation, and open space. Between 1933 and 1937, the PWA constructed 51 housing projects, mostly in major cities, to serve as national models.

In 1937, the PWA Housing Division was superseded by the United States Housing Authority (USHA). Gilmor Homes was designed in 1940 as low-rent housing for the Housing Authority of Baltimore City, the local office of the USHA. In 1940, the Housing Authority was comprised of James R. Edmunds, Jr., Chairman; George M. Smith, Vice Chairman; George C. Mantz, Treasurer; Samuel H. Hoffberger; and George B. Murphy. The staff of the Housing Authority included: Y.W. Dillehunt, Secretary-Executive Director; C.D. Loomis, Technical Director; G.S. Childs, Construction Supervisor; and C.A. Mohr, Assistant Technical Director.

The 35 buildings that comprise Gilmor Homes were designed by a prominent local architectural team, befitting the challenge of an innovative revitalization project utilizing a building type of relative infancy. The architectural firm selected to execute the task for the Housing Authority was Clyde N. Friz & Associates. Friz worked in conjunction with others on the project, including Spencer E. Sisco (the Assistant Architect), A.J. Klinkhart (Associate Architect) and Frederick Thomas (Associate Architect). Consultants on the project included: Joseph C. Gardner (Landscape Architect), Egli & Compf (Mechanical Engineers) and Van R.P. Sax (Structural

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 2

Gilmor Homes
name of property
Baltimore City, Maryland
county and State

Engineers).

Clyde N. Friz was educated at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and began practicing architecture in the 1880s in St. Louis. He moved to Baltimore in 1900 to serve as a draftsman with the firm of Wyatt & Nolting. In 1925, he opened his own office and designed several important buildings in Baltimore, including the Enoch Pratt Library and the Scottish Rite Temple, in conjunction with John Russell Pope, Consulting Architects. Friz died in 1942, shortly after Gilmor Homes' completion.

Gilmor Homes occupies four square blocks between Laurens and Presbury, Gilmor and Fulton and is a significant example of public housing in the relatively early years of the movement. The city grid was altered slightly to accommodate the project: Lorman Street, between Mount and Gilmor, was removed to accommodate a super block. In addition, many early rowhouses and alley dwellings were demolished for the project, including the ten-horse arabber stable of Peter Richard Janey, an African-American arabber in the Sandtown community. The 1600 blocks of Gilmor and Fulton were not within the boundaries of the Gilmor Homes property lines, and thus these rowhouses were retained. The originally "excepted property" along the 1700 block of Laurens has since been purchased and outfitted with pools and a bathhouse.

Each garden apartment block was designed to accommodate 10, 15, or 20 dwelling units. A brochure, undated but distributed after the buildings were occupied by 587 families, illustrates the design attributes of Gilmor Homes' low-scale, campus-like public housing (see attached). The development was noted for its "excellent location" in northwest Baltimore, which offered an educational advantage (five public elementary schools, one public junior high school, one parochial elementary school, Frederick Douglass High School, and Carver Vocational School, as well as access to the Enoch Pratt Library at Pennsylvania and North Avenues), medical and shopping facilities, and the availability of public transportation. Recreation was also emphasized: the McAbee Playground at Laurens and Gilmor and the YMCA and YWCA on Druid Hill and Madison Avenues, respectively, were within walking distance. More importantly, there were playgrounds in each block of the development "so that children need not cross streets to play outside." Special activities/clubs were also available for adults through the development's Community Building.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 3

Gilmor Homes
name of property
Baltimore City, Maryland
county and State

Other amenities included a "comfortable living room in every home," and a combination sitting area and drying yard outside. Parking was also available within the development's grounds.

The brochure indicates that rent was based on family income and number of children. Rent equalled approximately one-fifth of a small family's income, and one-sixth of a large families' income.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 1

Gilmor Homes
name of property
Baltimore City, Maryland
county and State

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brochure for Gilmor Homes, undated, Enoch Pratt Free Library, vertical file.
City of Baltimore Housing Authority, Original Plans, Gilmor Homes, 1940.
Langston Terrace Dwellings, Washington, D.C. Historic Landmark Application
Form, 1987.

SANDTOWN-WINCHESTER/PENN-NORTH
RECONNAISSANCE-LEVEL SURVEY FORM

Survey No. B-4485

Neg. No. 5/13

Historic Name Gilmor Homes
Current Name/Use Gilmor Homes
Address(es) Gilmor and Presstman Streets

Resource/Property Type ☐ Rowhouses
☐ Commercial Structure
☐ Public/Institutional Building
☒ Attached ☒ Public Housing
☒ Freestanding ☐ Site
☐ Other
Note: garden apartments

Stories 3

Primary Material brick Secondary Material fieldstone, cast-stone

Roof Form flat

No. of Bays in Unit/Facade 9/bldg If Rowhouse: ☐ Flat Front ☐ Swell Front ☐ Porch

Window Type: ☒ Double-Hung Door Type: ☒ Single-Leaf
☒ 1/1 Sash ☐ Double-Leaf
☐ 2/2 Sash ☐ Number of panels (if visible)
☐ 2/1 Sash ☐ Transom
☐ Other Sash
☐ Transom

Architectural Style Moderne Date c. 1941

Noteworthy Features: Blocks of garden apartments placed perpendicular to the street, with open space between. Architrave cornice. Brick beltcourse at upper story and cast-stone beltcourse defining base from upper stories. Fieldstone foundation. Grouped doors and windows. Flat window and door heads.

Alterations: ☐ Formstone ☐ Stucco
☐ Vinyl/Aluminum ☐ Window/Door Changes
☐ Awnings ☐ Missing Cornice Elements
☐ First-Floor Use Change ☐ Other: _____

Status: ☒ Occupied ☐ Vacant ☐ Mixed

NR Evaluation: ☒ Contributing ☐ Non-Contributing

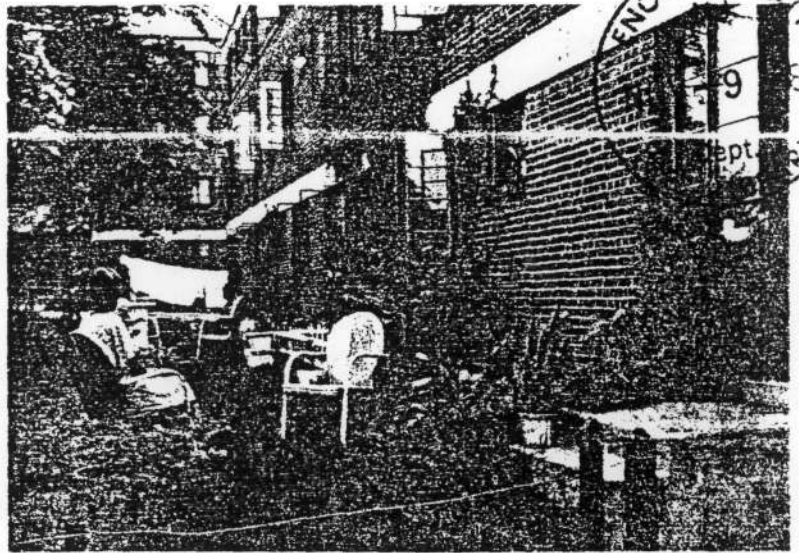
Recommended for Intensive Level: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Surveyor: Joey Lampl
Date: February-April 1992

Affiliation: Robinson & Associates

Sandtown - Winchester (Baltimore)

GILMOR HOMES



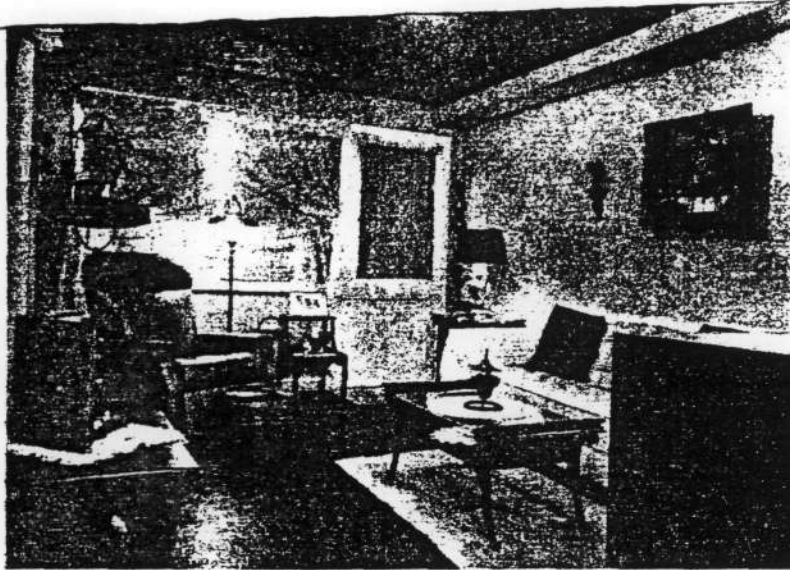
Gilmor Homes are noted for their excellent location right in the center of northwest Baltimore. The L-shaped project, where 587 families live, is bounded on the south by Laurens and Baker Streets, on the east by Gilmor Street, on the north by Presbury Street, and on the west by Fulton Avenue and Mount Street.

The location is a popular one for many reasons. Five public elementary schools, one public junior high school, and one parochial elementary school in the immediate neighborhood enable young children to go to school near home. Carver Vocational School and Douglass High School provide education for older children within walking distance. Adults and children alike will find the Enoch Pratt Library branch at North and Pennsylvania Avenues useful for their education and relaxation.

Churches of many denominations abound in the community. Medical facilities at the Druid Hill Health

221-58

B-4485



A comfortable living room in every home

Center at North Avenue and Cumberland Street are within walking distance. Provident and Lutheran Hospitals can be reached easily.

The shopper will find conveniently located many stores which carry a wide variety of goods to please every member of the family. The stores on Pennsylvania Avenue are within walking distance. Lafayette Market and Mondawmin Shopping Center can also be reached easily from Gilmor Homes. The Numbers 1, 13, 19, and 21 buslines provide a way to go to other parts of town.

Children will be delighted with the McAbee Playground at Laurens and Gilmor Streets. There they will find, among other things, a wading pool and basketball courts. Adults and children can enjoy the facilities of the YMCA on Druid Hill Avenue or the Madison Avenue YWCA just a few blocks away.

One of the special attractions of Gilmor Homes is



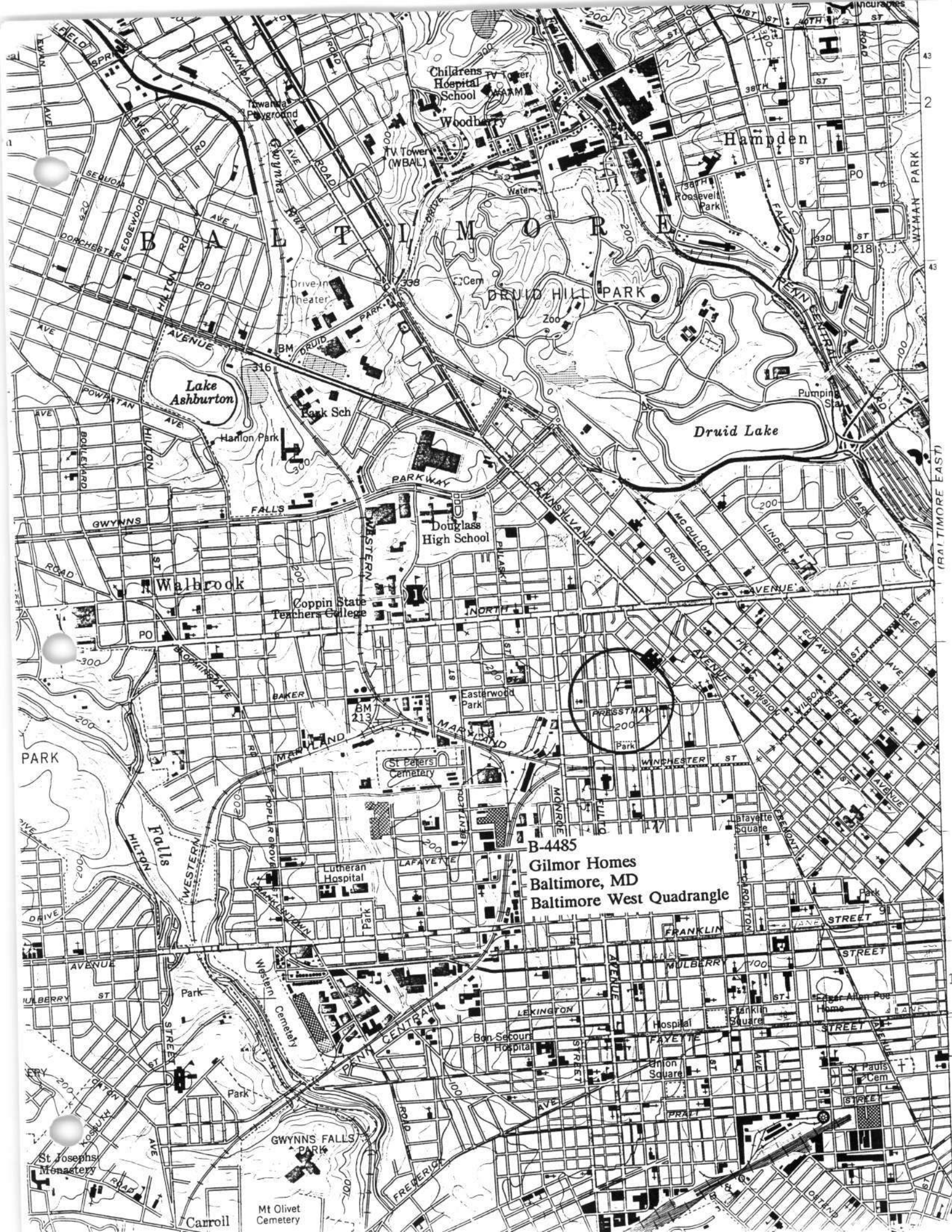
A playground in each block

the playground in each block so that children need not cross streets to play outside. In addition, the Department of Recreation plans activities for children of all ages in the Community Building. Older people may want to join in the activities of the Golden Age Club which meets every Thursday in the Community Building.

Gilmor Homes is made up of 35 attractive brick buildings, 6 of which are four stories in height. The four-story buildings contain eight one- or two-bedroom apartments which open onto a center hall. Many of the apartments have private balconies. The other 29 buildings are three stories in height and contain one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments, each with a separate entrance to the outside. Each apartment at Gilmor Homes has a living room, a modern bath, one, two, or three bedrooms, and full kitchen facilities that will delight any housekeeper. While most of the apartments have a separate kitchen, some of the one-bedroom apartments



B-4485 Area
before
Gilmor Homes
Baltimore, MD
Bromley Atlas, 1896



B-4485
Gilmore Homes
Baltimore, MD
Baltimore West Quadrangle



SANDTOWN-WINCHESTER/PENN. NORTH

#B-4485

BALTIMORE, MD

ELIZABETH GO LAMPL

MARCH 1992

COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION (CITY OF BALTIMORE)

GILMOR HOMES

VIEW AT GILMOR AND PRESSTMAN STS., FACING SOUTHWEST

ROLL 5/NEG 13

1 of 2



Sandtown-Winchester/Penn-North

#B-4485

Baltimore, MD

Leonard Jackson

July 1992

City of Baltimore, Commission for Historical and Architectural
Preservation

Historic: Gilmor Homes

Current: Gilmor Homes

Gilmor and Prestman Streets

VIEW FACING NORTHWEST

Roll 9 / Neg 1

2 of 2